

CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

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"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."—Paul.

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[From the Universalist Magazine.]

"For he that is dead is freed from sin."

Romans vi. 7.

A difference of opinion concerning the apostle's meaning in these words has been entertained. The best way to settle a controverted point is to discuss it fairly and dispassionately, each one stating his views, with the evidences that lead him to adopt them. The writer of this knows very well that some of his brethren to whose judgment he has always paid deference, entertain views of this passage unlike his own; he therefore, has often been led to think, either that they have not given the subject a minute examination, or have made up their minds without sufficiently considering the connexion in which the passage is found.

The main design of the apostle in the fifth chapter of this epistle appears to have been to set forth, by way of antithesis, the extent of sin and death on the one hand, and the extent of life through Jesus Christ on the other. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many (i. e. as Wakefield, Parkhurst, and many other critics render *hoi polloi*, the many, the multitude, the whole bulk of mankind,) be made righteous." The apostle then asserts in the clearest and boldest manner, that the law entered for the purpose that the offence might abound, and that wherever sin abounded grace did much more abound; the consequence of all which would be, "that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so, (i. e. co-extensively) might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

The apostle then anticipates an objection, with which the sixth chapter commences, and an objection too which is even to this day made to the doctrine of unlimited and triumphant grace by those who, in their words, turn "the grace of our God into lasciviousness." And this objection was, that the doctrine he had then taught them exerted an evil influence upon those who believed it, by inducing them to *continue in sin* that grace might abound. He proceeds to refute this objection by shewing that divine grace had a tendency to prevent men from sinning. This grace had abounded unto life in them. They were "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Hence he asks the

question in the second verse, "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" He then shews the manner in which they were dead to sin; from which he goes on to draw a parallel, placing Christ with what he had experienced on the one hand, and them, with their condition and obligations on the other. He speaks of the death of Christ and of the death of believers *to sin*, and uses the word death in these two senses. He parallels their *deadness to sin*, with the death of Christ, by which he was delivered from all corruption; their *newness of life*, with the resurrection of Christ by the glory of the Father; and infers that they should not serve sin from the fact, that the state into which Christ had entered was free from sin. Now let us trace out the reasoning and parallel of the apostle, verse after verse.

He had asked the question, as I have already noticed, "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" He then inquires, "know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" i. e. into the likeness of it. To be baptized into Christ is to be baptized into his spirit and temper; it is to "put on Christ;" it is to be "made like unto the Son of God." This was the way (see verse 4) in which they were "buried with him by baptism into death," namely, *death to sin*. From this the apostle infers that they should not *continue in sin*. See his words; "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here you see the parallel and the inference; that as Christ had entered into a state of life, so they should "walk in newness of life." The reason of this is made to appear in the next verse. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." That is, if they had actually been buried with him by baptism, or, in other words, been imbued in his spirit and temper, the natural consequence would be that their new and spiritual condition would be in the likeness of his resurrection, a state of newness of life. The apostle then continues, "knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Why not serve sin? For the same reason that they "should walk in newness of life." Christ had been "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," hence they "should walk in newness of life;" if they had been "planted together in the likeness of his death," they should "be

also in the likeness of his resurrection ;" their "old man," their "body of sin," was crucified with him and destroyed, that henceforth they should not serve sin, because "he that is dead is freed from sin." As if he had said, the state into which Christ has entered is free from sin, and therefore we should not serve sin. Thus he brings his parallel and reasoning to a conclusion.— Christ had died, their body of sin was crucified with him ; Christ had been raised from the dead, they should walk in newness of life ; "he that is dead is freed from sin," henceforth "they should not serve sin." It appears to me, if we do not admit, that Paul meant he that is dead, in the literal sense, is freed from sin, we leave one side of his parallel incomplete, and make his reasoning inconclusive ; we seem to take away the very key-stone from which the whole arch receives its strength. Why should the apostle parallel the crucifixion of their body of sin with the crucifixion of Christ ; their resurrection into a new state of life with the resurrection of Christ, and not consider (what was, to say the least, as important as any of the rest) the purity of the resurrection state as a motive for the Roman Christians to be pure. John says, "and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he (Christ) is pure." But Paul forgot all about the *purity* of Christ in his immortal existence, unless we allow that he spoke of the future state when he said, "*he that is dead is freed from sin ;*" for this is the only verse in the whole chapter in which he can be supposed to have spoken of the *purity* of that state.

It appears to me furthermore, that the words which immediately succeed the controverted passage lead us to understand it in application to literal death. Let us then read the passage in connexion with what follows. "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead *with Christ*, we believe that we shall also live with him." Here let me ask, why did the apostle say, "if we be dead *with Christ*?" What need was there of adding the words *with Christ*, unless he had referred to the literal death of Christ? If he had referred to the believer's *death to sin*, it would have been sufficient to have said, "now, if we be dead." But as he evidently referred to the literal death of Christ, we see the propriety of his saying, "now, if we be dead *with Christ*," which was the same that he meant in the fourth verse by being "buried with him by baptism into death."

It also appears to me evident that the apostle in the words before us meant to propose an example to those to whom he was writing. "Henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now is it not absurd to suppose that he meant to make them an example unto

themselves? What propriety would there be in telling them not to serve sin because they did not serve sin? Yet this is involved in the supposition that the apostle did not allude to literal death.

I may remark here that this explanation represents the resurrection state as it is represented by the apostle in 1 Cor. xv. where he says that "the dead shall be raised incorruptible," and implies, to say no more, that sin, the sting of death, will in that state have no existence.

But it may be said that Paul probably alluded in the passage before us to his brethren who had become *dead to sin*, because he says near the close of the chapter that they were made free from sin. This does not in the least invalidate what I have said. For I may allow that they were entirely free from sin without any inconsistency. In fact, I have contended that the apostle exhorted them not to serve sin, or, in other words, to be free from it, *because* the state into which their master had entered was free from sin.

Thus have I given my views of the passage and the reasons why I have adopted them. And I confess it appears one of the most glorious truths that revelation discloses, that the future is an incorruptible state of existence. Jesus, while on earth, was not a sinner. He took part of flesh and blood ; "he took on him the seed of Abraham ;" "in all things it behoveth him to be made like unto his brethren ;" he "was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin*." So that unless he be tempted now in all points like as we are, the change which he experienced was a constitutional change. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Hence I understand Paul as meaning that "he that is dead is free from sin" *constitutionally*, for Christ always was free in every other sense. And unless the apostle refers to this constitutional state of purity when he speaks of the "*spiritual body*" and "*the image of the heavenly*," it is difficult for me to conceive what he means. In view of this subject, we may apply to ourselves the apostle's words, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." RICHARDS.

[From the Christian Telescope.]

NANTUCKET, May 30, 1826.

Mr. John Webster, a respectable and highly intelligent inhabitant of this town, has recently renounced the sentiments of the Methodist church in this place, of which he has been a zealous and devoted member for a number of years, and publicly declared his belief in the final purification and happiness of all moral beings. To this sentiment Mr. W. has been gradually inclining for some months past, on account of accustoming

himself to view the character of God as the unchanging friend and benefactor of his dependent offspring. The most serious and firm conviction now rests on the mind of this new convert to the unlimited salvation of God, that the doctrine of never-ending torment is inconsistent with his understanding of the scriptures, and with the character and attributes of Deity, as manifested in the great volume of nature.

The charge preferred against him by his Methodist brethren is contained in the following words: "*For holding and disseminating doctrines contrary to our discipline and the scriptures.*" The accused acknowledged that he held and disseminated doctrines contrary to the methodist discipline, but that he held doctrines contrary to the scriptures he denied, affirming what his former brethren could not dispute, that the fact was he held doctrines contrary to the scriptures as the methodists understand them.

The writer of this article was told by Mr. W. that he requested the privilege of speaking one hour only, in hearing of the church to which he had belonged, for the purpose of assigning his reasons for the renunciation of his former sentiments. This privilege he was denied.

Mr. W. states that he feels no bitterness whatever towards his methodist friends and brethren, and thinks they acted consistently with their discipline in withdrawing from him their fellowship. He now wishes they may withhold prejudice, so far as to restrain the pestiferous breath of slander; this he sincerely hopes may hereafter be the case, without designing to criminate any, or wishing to give needless and unwholesome advice. His reputation as a man and a citizen is as valuable to him now, as at any former period of his life. When a methodist, he endeavored to support what he believed. He was then sincere, but no more so than at the present time, that such may have been the fact cannot reasonably be disputed, especially if it be remembered that it is possible for a man as sincerely to believe an error as the truth; his change of opinion therefore is no evidence of insincerity, and we earnestly inquire, whose province it is to condemn, because he is unable to convince? "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The sole object of the above remarks is to acquaint the public with plain matters of fact, so far as they have come to our knowledge. The many instances which might be named, of those once believing in methodism, and other partial schemes, renouncing their sentiments and embracing more liberal views, should serve to convince our brethren of different denominations, of the notorious truth, that even believers in endless misery are fallible, and often liable to become dissatisfied with their own faith, and cheerfully espouse

a cause they once despised—one which we think accords infinitely better with the sympathies and benevolence of the human heart, presenting the character of the Divine Being in its original beauty and excellence.

W. M.

P. S. When Mr. Webster began to doubt the sentiments which he had formerly believed, his methodist brethren denounced him at once as a deist, though at that time, when thus condemned for being a deist, he had never in his life read a deistical author, but declared that his change of opinion was the result of his own reflection united with an attentive examination of the scriptures. The above statements the writer received from the lips of Mr. W. and therefore conceives them substantially correct. Our whole aim has been to state simple and unadorned facts. If any thing in this communication has been misstated, it has been done through mistake and not through design.

W. M.

[For the Christian Intelligencer.]

SUPERSTITION.

Take Nature's path, and mad opinions leave;
All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;
Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;
And, mourn our various portions as we please,
Equal is common sense and common ease.

POPE.

I have said, in the preceding number of this paper, substantially, superstition is altogether incompatible with *morality*, because destitute of reason;—and every system of theology not founded in reason, or which exacts our *faith* in any thing which is not capable of a *rational explanation*, ought to be abandoned, because *incomprehensible*. The inference was, morality constitutes the only system of theology, which can be of service to mankind, taken as a whole. Of this we are assured, when we reflect that *morality* embraces all the rules of conduct and principles of justice, which are susceptible of being taught, understood, or practised, consistently with the great attributes of Deity, his omnipotence, omniscience and eternity, and the relationship which he has established between man and man, so as to produce their greatest good and happiness. There are some religions afloat in the world, which exact a sad, sour, sober reverence for an ideal relationship between God and man, beside the observance of those moral duties which every man owes to his neighbor. But if one will compare any ideas which he may have of such a relationship, with his ideas of the *omnipotence* and *unchangeableness* of God, he cannot, I think, fail to discover their discrepancy, and abandon either the one set or the other.

"The idea of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness and wisdom, (says Mr. Locke in his Essay upon the Human Understanding,) whose

workmanship we are, and on whom we depend ; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action, as might place morality among the sciences capable of demonstration ; wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestible as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out to any one, that will apply himself with the same indifference and attention to the one, as he does to the other of these sciences." For a man to recognize a contrary doctrine, would be no less than to say, he is willing to act without knowing upon what principles, or understanding the nature of his action, and to believe without knowing why he should believe, which is sheer superstition and fanaticism, and something which he never learned or acquired himself, but what he has had taught him, or he inherited from his ancestors. It is only the mode of acting or believing which he possesses, and not a knowledge of the nature of either ; for of the nature of the action, or the consistency of the belief, he knows no more than the boy who has been learned to repeat an enigma, while ignorant of its meaning. Many men, however, and I may say, most men, from a variety of causes, which are through indolence, suffered to operate upon their passions, yield themselves up to this contrary doctrine, and lay hold of foreign and unnatural objects, the monsters of a bewildered imagination, as guides to their senses. They assume premises which no mortal can comprehend, and talk of the natural depravity of the human heart—miracles—a future state of rewards and punishments, and a score of other absurdities, more resembling the visionary speculations of a Don Quixotte, backed up by the old saws of Sancho Panza, than the religious tenets of rational men, with as much familiarity as of the most simple story. The necessary consequence is, their deductions are fallacious, and their conclusions inconsistent, and tenable only hypothetically. They are lavish of their praises where none are due at one time, and at other times withhold them improperly ; and so, *mutatis mutandis*, with their censures. They shut from the view those important distinctions which exist between motives and measures, and which point out the true line of demarkation between merited punishment and cruelty on the one hand, and duty and benevolence on the other. And what is still more to be wondered at, they so represent the designs of Deity in the creation of man and this world, as to make all the enjoyments of this world but so many curses, without value, and despicable indeed. But to cap the whole, they say, *the wicked seldom live out half their days!*

In order to avoid inconsistency in theological systems, and to judge correctly and uniformly in all similar cases, the divine plan must necessarily be adopted as in other calculations respecting other objects. *We must have a standard for our government, and never make a decision, unless the question presented can be brought within its immediate jurisdiction ; for in matters of religion, it is better for one to stand still, than go wrong.* We should attempt to weigh those objects only which are proportioned to our balance. Our senses, or an industrious exercise of the faculties with which we are endowed by nature, constitute the *balance* in which all propositions should be weighed. Nothing should be relied on, if we would avoid error, which is not proved to the understanding ; for though the thing relied on credulously and without proof, should exist in reality, we could honestly claim no merit on account of our faith. If a man in purchasing lottery tickets, chances to select one which afterwards draws a prize, he thinks no better of his own judgment for it. At least, none but a fool would. Now this rule of limited judiciary, (if the study of nature may be, or can be called limited) in matters relating to Deity, is happily in accordance with that idea of universal justice to which all assent, viz. where little is given, little will be required,—which idea, while it inspires the weak with confidence, enjoins every man to keep within his own proper orbit, circumscribed by the extent, and discovered to him by the exercise of his reason. Moreover, it chimes harmoniously with the well known fact, that we are neither omnipotent or omniscient, but limited in all our attributes and faculties, and therefore capable of understanding only such parts of infinity as are essential to our happiness.

The idea of a *standard* supposes something fixed, permanent and immutable in its nature, as the objects to which it is applied, to say the least. We have seen what constitutes the *balance* in which all things ought to be weighed, but it must not be forgotten that a *balance without weights*, is but an imperfect standard, inasmuch as it cannot show the comparative difference of objects. Well then, self-evident, or demonstrative facts, and the laws of nature, made known by their operations, and effect upon the senses, are the only weights upon which we can rely with safety. All other criterions are liable to be counterfeited, injured or varied by the ingenuity of man, or the rust of time ; but they are beyond the reach of all, eternally the same. They are so wisely distributed and portrayed in the works of creation, the moment we come into existence, that moment we begin to become acquainted with their nature, and discover their beauty, wisdom, and perfect

mechanism ; and these discoveries give an impulse to our reflections, which inclined them as naturally, and undesignedly, and, I may add, as *unavoidably*, towards Deity, as the pendulum of a clock, once set in motion, is inclined towards the centre of the arc through which it vibrates. In the language of the poet,

As flame ascends,
As bodies to their proper centre move,
As the pois'd ocean to the attracting moon
Obedient swells, and every headlong stream
Dissolves its circling waters to the main ;
So all things, which have life, aspire to God,
The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,
Centre of souls !

AKENSIDE.

THEOPHILANTHROPIST.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

A Mr. H***** of Turner, in relating the exercises of his mind in a conference meeting of the Freewill Baptists, observed, that he had been tried and tormented with the doctrine of Universalism.—Said he, "I have pondered on the subject a vast deal ; but finally, a thought struck me which refuted the whole system, at once. It is this, viz. if all mankind are to be saved, I cannot see the need of a Saviour !" And, as usually is the case in those meetings, (after one has exhibited such profundity of "thought" and accuracy of criticism in the overthrow of the Universal doctrine,) Mr. H. was received into the church.

Would there not be as much propriety in asking this *honest critic*, What need there would be of a Saviour, if men could save themselves ? Or, what use is there, in sending a Saviour for those, who are not to be saved ? When he answers this, his own "thought" will, at least, be better understood.

Z. T.

BLASPHEMY.

As an evidence of "ravings of fanaticism and roarings of superstition," so prevalent among a certain few in this place, we give publicity to the following statement of facts, of the truth of which we assure the public that testimony can be adduced by two respectable witnesses.

A Mr. Hornell, a student in the Auburn Theological Seminary, lately visited a young lady of this village, for whose "soul" he expressed great concern. After the usual interrogatories, by which he ascertained she was not a professor of religion, he told her if she did not repent THAT NIGHT, she would certainly be damned ! He condescended, however, to allow her two minutes to reflect upon the subject and decide upon her fate.—The two minutes expired, and the lady not having made her election, this long-faced, lantern-jawed hypocrite with great emphasis exclaimed, "Oh, thou wretch ! An angel in heaven is this moment recording your destiny !—you are certainly DAMNED !" "

Auburn Examiner.

DUELLING.

The public morals have again been insulted by two of our most distinguished statesmen, we say distinguished, for Mr. Clay ranks among the highest in our nation, and Mr. Randolph, in point of fame, is not exceeded by any in it. These two gentlemen had a meeting, shook hands, exchanged shots, and settled their affair of honor. It is not so much on account of the loss our country would sustain by the fall of any duellist, no matter who or what he is, that we complain of these horrid affairs ; but the demoralizing tendency of them—the pernicious example they set before the nation—their liability to be imitated by every fool in our country, who has not learned to curb his petulance, and suppress his passions.

Rel. Messenger.

CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

PORTLAND.....SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1826.

EXTRACT

Of a Letter to the Editor, dated Turner, June 8, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have recently returned from a tour eastward, where I spent several months ; partly, to gratify my curiosity to learn the state of religion, in that part of Maine, and partly, with the hope that by the grace of Him, in whom I trust, I might be instrumental in disseminating a knowledge of the impartial love and salvation of the Father of mercies. I conducted divine service in about twenty different towns ; in many of which, the "angel's message to the Shepherds, had never before been publicly proclaimed, and illustrated by corresponding scripture testimony. My meetings were generally well attended, and large assemblies evinced their love for the truth, though announced by a young and inexperienced preacher.

But as I am seriously opposed to *boasting* of conquests, or wonderful success in the ministry, or of honoring one's self, rather than God, as is too often the case with orthodox preachers, it must suffice to say, that a spirit of general inquiry prevails, in those places which I visited, and numbers are almost daily emerging from the mists of the dark systems and traditions of men, into the unclouded day of universal light.

The brethren resident in Palmyra, Newport, St. Albans and Plymouth, are now disposed to employ a preacher constantly, and would, I believe, give a decent support. May the Lord of the vineyard send them a faithful servant, enable him to preach by doctrine, precept and example, and crown his labors with abundant success, to the spiritual and moral improvement of that region of the State.

Z. T.

REMARKS.

We are much pleased with the spirit which pervades the above article, as well as with the welcome intelligence that it brings, and seize the present moment to lay it before our friends, to whom it will be highly acceptable. It is matter of rejoicing to every discerning mind and christian heart, that our brethren in different places, scattered as sheep on the mountains without a shepherd, should feel the importance of employing a constant ministry, whereby their own souls may be fed with the bread of life

and their families and friends have an opportunity of assembling and worshipping God, on the day which is consecrated to rest, meditation, and religious instruction.—We are fully satisfied it would be far better, where it is practicable, to engage some young brother, of promising talents and graces, to preach regularly, in several towns in rotation, on the sabbath, than to expend the means that are raised, in occasional meetings on those days, which should be devoted to industry and labor; though the motives in the last case be equally as pure, and the ministers employed, much more experienced in their profession.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE WEST.

It will be seen by the selection below, from the *Circular Letter* of the Cayuga Branch Association, for 1826, as published in the *Gospel Advocate*, that the word of truth runs and is glorified in that quarter of the vineyard.

"In addition to the above, we have abundant reason to praise the most High, who has made us more than conquerors, through him who loved us and washed us from our sins with his own blood, when we reflect that only five years since there was not one society in the faith of Abraham, found in the county of Cayuga, while now there are seven, and in other parts of our goodly land a continued increase of Societies and of Believers. Surely brethren the Lord is with us, and if the Lord be for us who then can be against us, (we conclude none but an unbelieving world.) Let us then wait on the Lord patiently, for we have his word, that they shall all know him from the least of them unto the greatest of them, for he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will he remember no more, let us therefore be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful."

The following article from the "*Maine Baptist Herald*," is recommended to the special attention of our readers; we think it would be a profitable lesson for certain editors who are ready to publish every silly and false story, which clerical ingenuity and wickedness can invent against the doctrine of impartial Grace. We speak seriously, and without meaning to include all our opposers in the insinuation, when we say, that we believe that some of those reverend story-writers, are more under the influence "of wine," "women" and money, than the love of the truth as it is in Christ.

TRUTH.

Whatever besides through life's dark dangerous way
If Truth directs, you cannot go astray.

Of all the qualities that adorn the human mind, Truth is the most respectable. It is a rich, tho' simple ornament; and he who is not possessed of it, let his rank and qualities be what they may, will be forever despicable in the sight of the good and wise.

It is reported of Cyrus, when young, that being asked what was the first thing he learned, he answered, it was "to tell the truth," which was indeed,

"Though no science, fairly worth the seven."

When the wise men were commanded by the king to declare what was the strongest power on earth, such as exceeded even that of the monarch himself, they were all at a loss to answer; at length one said *Women*, another declared for *Wine*; but neither of those answers proving satisfactory, the prophet Daniel was consulted, who being endued with wisdom from on high, answered, that *Truth* was the strongest, and supported his assertions with such weighty arguments, that nobody could controvert them; thus his understanding was approved by the king and all the sages were humbled in his presence.

HOUSES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

We learn with much pleasure from Plymouth, (Mass.) the far-famed landing place of the Pilgrims, that the cause of truth is, like the march of mind, gradually advancing in that region. Says an esteemed friend, "We have purchased a very convenient and central lot—contracted for a building 70 by 50—the foundation is now laying—the frame is begun, and the House is to be completed in the course of the season. With the blessing of Heaven, we shall have the best house in the county."

"In the town of Duxbury, about 8 miles from this, they are going on in the same good work, and are more forward in the building than we are. This looks well, considering the foot-hold that superstition and error had got and held so long, in the "land of the Pilgrims." We have employed Br. J. H. Bugbee, for a year; but expect him to preach a part of the time in Carver and Plymton."

The VIIIth Vol. of the "*Universalist Magazine*" will commence on the 24th inst. with such improvements in its appearance as circumstances will permit; and we hope that our friends, who feel interested in the cause of Truth, will use their best endeavors to increase its patronage. The Magazine will be edited as heretofore, by Brs. H. Ballou, and T. Whittemore.

NEW PUBLICATION.

We have received with no ordinary satisfaction, the first No. of the "*STAR OF THE SOUTH*," published by an Association of believers, in Milledgeville, (Geo.) May it shine as the sun in the light of spiritual emancipation, and liberate millions from the bondage of ignorance, error and superstition.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

All those who have interested themselves, and all who may feel an interest in the establishment of a permanent and well regulated *Singing Choir* in the Universalist Society in this town, are requested to meet THIS EVENING (Saturday,) at the Meeting-House of said Society, at 8 o'clock precisely, to adopt measures for the establishment of a School for the instruction of those who may wish to attend, and for the disposition of the money raised for that purpose, and take any other steps for the furtherance of said object.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.

As most of our readers have probably been apprized, ere now, of the alarming fire, which filled the inhabitants of this town with consternation, on the morning of the 11th instant, we shall not be particular in describing that distressing scene. The fire broke out in an unfinished building near the corner of Fore and Cross-streets, and is supposed to be the work of an incendiary. It increased and extended with rapid and uncontrollable fury, till 29 buildings, including 12 dwelling houses, were wholly demolished; whereby 15 families were precipitated into the street, at a moment's warning. Accelerated in their destructive march by a strong gale from the South, the angry flames triumphed over the spirited resistance of men while hurling from their extinguishing batteries and battlement, volleys of water. The fire hurried its course through a cluster of wooden buildings, threatening, to all human appearance, soon to lay waste a considerable portion of this flourishing town. Light and burning combustibles were borne on the wings of the wind, through the sparkling air, to the distance of half a mile, and come down in igneous flakes on the roofs of dwelling houses, stores and other buildings.

But the fire was unexpectedly and fortunately arrested in its devouring course, by the extreme vigilance and activity of the Firewards, the prompt and ambitious exertions of the several Engine companies, together with the assistance of numerous citizens, who repaired instantly to the place, at the alarm of the bells.

The amount of property destroyed, is estimated at 25,000 dollars; a small part only of which was insured. We are sorry to learn that some of those people who suffered the greatest loss, were those whose pecuniary circumstances, least enabled them to bear it. It is consoling however to believe, that the inhabitants of Portland, so famed as they are for hospitality and charity, will not permit their neighbors to suffer, whom flames have robbed of their little all.

Several persons were injured, in their manly exertions to save the property of others; but, thanks to Heaven, no lives were lost. Those who narrowly escaped the fiery maw of the destroyer, and are as brands plucked from the burning, have abundant reason for gratitude. We hope it will be some consolation for them to know, that their meritorious exertions are duly appreciated, and their friends and neighbors cheerfully unite with them in offering the tribute of praise to that invisible Being who is the preserver of life.

TRACT SOCIETY.

We acknowledge the receipt of an interesting TRACT, devoted to correct principles, from the CITY OF NEW YORK. The number is well written, and contains much useful information. We hope the Society in that place will issue many Tracts of a similar character, and disseminate much truth in the earth.

LEGISLATIVE INTOLERANCE.

We learn by the *N. H. Patriot*, that the Committee appointed by the Legislature of that State, to nominate a Chaplain, for the present session, made a report nominating Rev. EDWARD TURNER, of Portsmouth—which report was rejected.

Mr. Toppan then moved that the Rev. preachers of Concord, be requested to officiate alternately.

Mr. EVANS, of Portsmouth, then rose, and offered some very liberal and conclusive remarks. He maintained that as it was not pretended but that Mr. Turner was an intelligent, pious preacher, it was wrong to reject him on account of his religious sentiments. If ministers of one denomination were to be introduced as Chaplains to the exclusion of all others; or even all the different denominations were to be included to the exclusion of any one, the government of the State, so far as it was constituted by the Representatives, would be *sectarian*. A sectarian Legislature—a sectarian administration—a sectarian government. Sectarianism and religion (said he) are two very different things.

But on taking the vote, Mr. Toppan's motion prevailed, 78 rising in favor, 53 against it.

At a subsequent period, Mr. Evans presented the following preamble and resolve:—

"Whereas the late proceeding in this House relative to the choice of a Chaplain, has called in question that spirit of toleration which is contemplated by our Bill of Rights, and which is essential both to the welfare and reputation of the State of New Hampshire: Therefore,

"Resolved, that any intolerance, or exclusion of any minister from the office of chaplain, on account of his religious persuasion, would be, in our opinion, highly improper and injurious."

This Resolve, was upon Mr. Evans' request, laid upon the table, in order to give time for that reflection that was due to its importance.

It is gratifying to learn that this important question is in a way for ample discussion in the New-Hampshire Legislature. Mr. Evans, it is true, is not of our persuasion, but is a liberal, able, noble minded politician. His knowledge of men and things is profound—it is universal. We have much reason for gratitude that a question of such vital importance to the political and religious interests of this country is about to be thoroughly canvassed; and that a man of such talents and extensive information as Mr. Evans, is on the side of equal rights and religious toleration. Many others, we have no doubt, will heartily enlist their talents, eloquence and love of truth in the same glorious cause. May the God of infinite mercy and power enable them to act with firmness, speaking in words that breathe and thoughts that burn.

[Since the above was in type, we have learned that the subject has been indefinitely postponed.]

MARRIED,

In this town, by Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Montague Warden to Miss Ann Hopkins. Mr. Daniel S. Abbot to Miss Hannah Graffman. In Tewksbury, (Mass.) Albus Rea, M. D. to Miss Nancy M. Brown.

DIED,

In this town, Mr. Samuel Jenkins, for several years past a valuable Instructor of Youth.—Mr. Timothy Boston, aged 40.—Mrs. Martha Witham, aged 26.—A child of Mr. J. M. Gates.

POETRY

HOWARD—By Dr. Darwin.

And now, BENEVOLENCE! thy rays divine
 Dart round the globe from Zembla to the Line;
 O'er each dark prison plays the cheering light,
 Like northern lustrous o'er the vault of night—
 From realm to realm, with cross or crescent crown'd,
 Where'er mankind and misery are found,
 O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,
 Thy HOWARD journeying seeks the house of wo.
 Down many a winding step to dungeon's dank,
 Where anguish wails aloud, and fetters clank;
 To caves bestrew'd with many a mouldering bone,
 And cells, whose echoes only learn to groan;
 Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,
 No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows,
 He treads, inemulous of fame or wealth,
 Profuse of toil and prodigal of health;
 With soft assuasive eloquence expands
 Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands;
 Leads stern-eye'd justice to the dark domains,
 If not to sever, to relax the chains;
 Or guides awaken'd mercy through the gloom,
 And shows the prison, sister to the tomb!—
 Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,
 To her fond husband liberty and life!
 —The spirits of the good, who bend from high
 Wide o'er these earthly scenes their partial eye,
 When first, array'd in Virtue's purest robe,
 They saw her HOWARD traversing the globe;
 Saw round his brows her sun-like glory blaze
 In arrowy circles of unwearied rays;
 Mistook a mortal for an angel guest,
 And ask'd what seraph-foot the earth imprest.
 —Onward he moves!—Disease and death retire,
 And murmuring demons hate him and admire.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

Two men recently travelling in different directions, met in a woodland; the elder of whom (a Congregational minister) began an inquiry relative to the ways and distances to certain towns and places, &c. After the other man had answered his questions as well as he was capable of, he made bold to ask him whither he was bound; to which the Congregationalist replied, that he was engaged in filling vacancies, &c. On further inquiry, he said that he was a preacher. A preacher of what? said the other. His reply was, that he preached the Bible. Ah, that may be; but the Bible brings a great many things to view. Yes, said the minister, so it does; and among others, that we are all fallen creatures. Truly, said the other; and here you have a specimen of the Bible account of man's ruined state; quoting Rom. iii. 23, 24. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Ah, exclaimed the Congregational preacher; I see where you are; you are on the Universal plan.

Query. How did he know the man was a Universalist? Not, surely, because a word had been dropt favoring that sentiment, excepting the quotation from the Bible. Hence, it appears that

a man who is not *totally blind*, can discover that, the doctrine of the scriptures, is the Universal doctrine. H.

MAHOMMEDAN PURGATORY.

When a corpse is laid in the grave, they say he is received by an angel, who gives him notice of the coming of the two examiners; which are two black livid angels, of a terrible appearance, named Monker and Nakir. These order the dead person to sit upright, and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, and the mission of Mohammed. If he answer rightly, they suffer the body to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by the air of Paradise; but, if not, they beat him on the temples, with iron maces, till he roars out for anguish so loud, that he is heard by all from east to west, except men and genii. Then they press the earth on the corpse, which is gnawed and stung till the resurrection, by ninety-nine dragons, with seven heads each; or, as others say, their sins will become venomous beasts, the grievous ones stinging like dragons, the smaller like scorpions, and the others like serpents; circumstances which some understand in a figurative sense.—Sale's Koran.

The above account of future punishment can be as well supported from Scripture testimony, and is about as reasonable as the orthodox hypothesis of torment after death. It matters not whether a disciple of Mahomet, or Calvin, or Hopkins, or Arminius informs the world of the kind or quality of future punishment. Gos. Her.

CHRISTIAN TELESCOPE,
AND
ANTI-THEOCRAT.

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Subscriptions must be returned as early as the first of July ensuing.

Providence, (R. I.) June, 1826.

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